

the county when I informed him of my find. Elsewhere I have taken it, again singly, at the Lizard, Deal, and in the Suffolk Breck.— A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

***Hypena obsitalis* (Hb.) the Bloxworth Snout (Lep.: Noctuidae) new to mainland Hampshire**

At 6.50pm on 12th November 1994, as I went into our conservatory I saw an unfamiliar moth at rest on the outside of the window. It appeared to be a medium-sized snout, with pointed wings and strong lines on its underside. I hurried out but had only the briefest glimpse of its upperside before it flew off in the breeze towards my m.v. lamp. It was not until 8.15pm that I rediscovered it in a patch of shadowed wall and boxed it, recognising it from the illustrations as a female *Hypena obsitalis* Hb., the Bloxworth Snout. I was later able to obtain several photographs.

This Mediterranean species was first noted in Britain on 21st September 1884 by the Reverend Octavius Pickard Cambridge at Bloxworth in Dorset. By 1983, seven further records had been published: Cambridgeshire (1895), Dorset (1917 and 1965), Cork (1936), Cornwall (1943), Scilly (1962) and Sussex (1983). Bernard Skinner has kindly this week sent me details of four more occurrences:

Shanklin, I.O.W.	A.H. Greenham	27th January 1968
Dover, Kent	G.H. Youden	18th August 1985
Perranporth, Cornwall	F.H. Smith	8th November 1987
Brixham, South Devon	B. Henwood	29th July 1989

The Selborne insect is therefore probably the thirteenth British record as a primary immigrant. I am grateful to Barry Goater for confirming the identification and for ratifying the new to mainland Hampshire status.

It is not clear whether this specimen arrived from abroad on the southerly airstreams of the preceding week or whether it had been disturbed from hibernation by the chopping down of next-door's ivy tods on 11th November. As there is plenty of the foodplant (*Parietaria judaica*, Pellitory-of-the-wall) in this village, the discovery of a local resident or temporarily resident colony, in addition to those found since 1990 in Devon and Cornwall, might be a possibility. A thorough search is intended, since absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

References: Bernard Skinner & David Wilson, 1984. *Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles* Viking, Harmondsworth; A.M. Emmet, 1991. *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* 7(2), Ch.3, Harley Books, Colchester; R.F. Bretherton, B. Goater & R.I. Lorimer, 1983. *Ibid.* 10 Harley Books, Colchester.

— ALASDAIR ASTON, Wake's Cottage, Selborne, Hampshire GU34 3JH.

A minor infestation of *Atropos* (Lep.: Sphingidae) in Hertfordshire, 1994

I received a call for advice in the village on 27th August this summer, from a gardener who had encountered a very large caterpillar devouring his potato plants. The description certainly fitted that of *Acherontia atropos* Linn. so I